

Meetings/Trainings

2nd Annual African Network for Influenza Surveillance and Epidemiology (ANISE) Meeting

Location: Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research, College of Health Science, The University of Ghana Campus, Legon, Accra, Ghana

Dates: January 11–12, 2011

This meeting follows on from the outstanding inaugural meeting held in Johannesburg, South Africa, December 7–9, 2009. The meeting was co-hosted by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research (NMIMR), and the U.S. Naval Medical Research Unit No. 3 (NAMRU-3). It brought together approximately 100 members from 23 African countries, along with representatives from Ghana Health Service, World Health Organization (WHO), Agence de Médecine Préventive (AMP), and Institut Pasteur.

Goals

The goal of the meeting is to share and promote the use of standardized surveillance methods in the regions among laboratorians, epidemiologists, veterinarians and other public health practitioners involved in influenza-related public health activities or influenza research in Africa.

Agenda

The two-day meeting included plenary sessions, breakout sessions, and poster presentations. Sessions concentrated on the following topics:

- Epidemiology in Africa
- Virologic Surveillance in Africa
- Other Respiratory Pathogens
- Animal-Human Interface/ Emerging Pandemic Threats
- Vaccine



Group photo from the 2nd Annual ANISE Meeting in Accra, Ghana.

Attendees discussed influenza surveillance and research projects that they had conducted over the past two years. Highlights of the meeting included brief presentations given by each country showcasing their surveillance achievements and epidemiologic and laboratory data. In addition, scientists presented posters on influenza research studies and projects in Africa.

Outcome

The meeting was a success that provided attendees an opportunity to present their data and share best practices. Future projects of the ANISE group that were proposed at the meeting included publishing a summary of 50 years of African influenza surveillance data, as well as giving each country the opportunity to publish its data in a 2011 issue of the *Journal of Infectious Disease*.

Laboratory Management Course for Influenza

Location: National Institute for Communicable Diseases [NICD] Campus, Johannesburg, South Africa

Dates: February 28–March 4, 2011

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in partnership with the Association of Public Health Laboratories (APHL) and the National Institute for Communicable Disease (NICD) in Johannesburg, South Africa sponsored a laboratory management course for influenza laboratories in Africa and select Asian countries. The course brought together 36 participants representing 25 countries and 8 instructors from various agencies such as the CDC, NICD, APHL, and the World Health Organization (WHO) Collaborating Center in Australia.

Goals

The goal of the training course is to help laboratories achieve, maintain, and improve global influenza surveillance systems by presenting various laboratory management topics to influenza laboratory managers and staff.

Agenda

Course topics included: Human Resources Basics, Biosafety for Lab Managers, Quality Assurance and Quality Control, Inventory Management, Specimen Collection and Processing, Laboratory Testing and Test Result Reporting, and National Influenza Center (NIC) Designation. The format for the course was a combination of lectures, demonstrations, and hands-on exercises. This format allowed participants to gain knowledge and information for implementation within their laboratories.

Outcome

The participants learned how to describe key aspects of laboratory biosafety including risk assessment, incident management and BSL-3 (biosafety level three) security practices. Additionally, participants learned how to develop strategies to implement Quality Assurance and Quality Control best practices, describe and develop an inventory management system, describe specimen collections and processing best practices for influenza detection, and they learned the roles and responsibilities of becoming and/or maintaining a NIC designation.



Group photo from the Laboratory Management Course for Influenza in Johannesburg, South Africa.

Influenza Writing Workshop

Location: Safari Park Hotel, Nairobi, Kenya

Dates: April 2011

The CDC-Kenya Influenza Program hosted a writing workshop in Nairobi in April 2011. An epidemiology professor from the University of California at San Francisco was the facilitator. Approximately 25 participants from 7 countries attended, along with 8 mentors.

Goals

The objective of the workshop was to help public health officials and researchers develop manuscripts for publication in peer-reviewed journals based on their influenza-related work.

Agenda

The students learned how to compose the different parts of a scientific manuscript (abstract, introduction, methods, results, and discussion), how to present data clearly and concisely, how to organize references, and how to determine what scientific journal would be most appropriate for their manuscript.

Outcome

Apart from providing host countries' influenza experts with guidance on how to present their findings, the writing workshop also served to support the Influenza Division's goal of broadly sharing global influenza data. The sharing of this new data will assist in clearer understanding of influenza in places that have not published data previously. With a better understanding of influenza activity and how it is impacting their communities, Ministries of Health can put policies in place for influenza prevention and control that may help to decrease morbidity and mortality associated with influenza.

West Africa Regional Training Workshop

Location: Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research, College of Health Science, The University of Ghana Campus, Legon, Accra, Ghana

Dates: June 7–10, 2011

The second West Africa Regional Training Workshop was held in Accra, Ghana. The main objective of the 2011 Training Workshop was to further strengthen the capacity for detection, diagnosis and monitoring of influenza. The Workshop convened 30 participants from nine countries in West Africa (Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, and Togo) as well as representatives from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), U.S. Naval Medical Research Unit No. 3 (NAMRU-3), Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research (NMIMR), and the World Health Organization (WHO). Participants included epidemiologists, clinicians, laboratorians, and surveillance officers working with influenza.

Goals

The objective is to describe the epidemiology of influenza; the steps for setting up national or locality specific influenza sentinel surveillance and to formulate a work plan for action. It is also to describe respiratory specimen collection, handling, transportation and processing and to organize, summarize and present results from sentinel surveillance for influenza.

Agenda

The workshop included presentations on key surveillance topics, practical exercises, break-out sessions, site visits, and country surveillance presentations.

Outcome

The expected result is to have participants at the end of the workshop to have acquired knowledge and skills to set up, implement and monitor sentinel surveillance for influenza.



Group photo from the West Africa Regional Training Workshop in Accra, Ghana.